SIDELIGHTS ON ITALIAN LIFE.

Partial View of the Royal Palace.

Country Road Near Rome.

A Government Building in Rome.



Rome-Before the provinces of Italy were united under one government the name of the country meant little more than a geographical expression, and there are still so many differences in habits and languages that it is difficult to speak of the inhabitants as a whole. The man from Piedmont may not be as different from the Neapolitan as he is from the Frenchman, but the dissimilarity is almost as great. In many respects the domestic habits of the housewife of Florence are as strange to the woman of Rome as are those of a resident of London, and the man-ners of a Sicilian are as amusing to the inhabitants of Milan as the behavior of an American.

Every province has its own styles and customs quite as independent of its neighbors as if they were foreigners. To suddenly unite this people under one government and make all classes amenable to one code of laws, was a most difficult undertaking. Great as the obstacles were recognized to be, the Italians knew that unity not only reduced the danger of their being dismembered by the powers, but afforded them their only chance of welding an-other nation from the fragments of the old Roman empire. While there are many discouraging features connected with the reorganization, the majority undoubtedly join in the opinion that the coalition must be continued in the face of all difficulties.

The Burden of Taxation.

Cne thing which the people of united Italy share in common is the burden of heavy taxation, for the state takes about 50 per cent of the income of the people, which is a larger proportion than is assessed by the government of any other country. Nothing escapes taxation, and land, foodstuffs and other necessities of life are levied upon most heavily. Land assessments are so high that the small owner hesitates to improve his property for fear of the increase in his taxes. That this precaution is necessary is shown by the fact that the land tax alone amounts to 20 or 25 per cent, and when the income tax is added to this it frequently runs as high as 40 and 50 per

Some of the rules of taxation are very unfair. For example, in many communes in the southern part of Italy the saddle horse of the landlord is declared exempt, but no provision is ever made to exclude the peasant's donkey. Aside from the heavy drain land, foodstuffs and personal property, the government maintains monopolies of salt, matches and Armed guards patrol the whole length of the seacoast to protect even the water of the ocean from the people, some of whom might manufacture salt by carrying off a bucket of water and allowing it to evaporate. It is not unusual to have two kinds of taxes levied against one article. Any kind of public document or commercial paper has to be stamped, and even the paper that must be used is subject to an additional fee. One must pay more for a railway ticket than is marked on the face of it.

Assessor Asks the Neighbors.

One of the worst features of this system of taxation is the method of assessment. There is no rule or order to it. An ignorant assessor comes to the house, looks over the furniture, inquires how many servants you keep, how many horses, etc.; after this he inquires of your neighbors about your habits, and upon the information gained in this haphazard manner he makes an estimate of what your in-come ought to be and fixes your assessment accordingly. It goes without saying that by such a system he blunders continually and rarely places the valuation at anything like what should be. Some families pay too little, while the majority of householders are imposed upon. A more expensive system could not possibly be invented. The returns for one commune showed that where \$4,000 had been raised by taxation, it had cost \$3,500

to levy and collect the same.

Agriculture has long been the main scurce of wealth in Italy, and the burden of taxation falls on the people who engage in this industry. Wheat is their principal crop, but they are unable to raise enough to feed the population and large quantities are imported every year. Italy is second only to France as a wine producing country, and leads both Austria and Spain in this respect. Italian wine is good for home consumption, but is unskillfully manufactured and does not travel well. It is only recently that the wine grower could be induced to adopt scientific methods to improve its adopt scientific methods to improve its cobble-stones and turns two sharp cor-strength and lasting qualities, but he ners. Aside from these disadvantages export trade. Most of the Italian wine other. The horses are ridden bareback

The wages of laborers and the incomes of professional men in Italy are finish. The excitement is so great that the winner has to be protected from labor runs from twenty-five cents to a dollar and a half while unskilled labor runs from twenty cents to a dollar. In some of the more prosperous parts of



Two Light-Hearted Italians.

Where Poverty Is Mocked.

of the latter is thrown into sharp reof the latter is thrown into sharp relief. The well-to-do family will occupy the first floor of a large house, while all around them, upstairs and down, will be a congestion of poverty stricken tenants under the same roof. The rich and poor not only live in the same house, but there is no quarter which is populated by one rank alone.

Every district and every block has its division of classes, the slums reaching even to the gates of the royal palace itself. A poor family living in a cellar, with scarcely enough clothing to hide their nakedness and barely enough food to keep them alive, can hardly escape a feeling of envy when splendid very doors, and costly viands are served so near that they can smell them. No wonder that anarchy breeds where th uneasy sleep of the poor is disturbed by dance music for merry-makers who revel while their neighbors starve.

The Italian upper-classes have been American matron. the subject of much comment because they seem to have a dislike for any kind of work except looking after land. The professions and commercial purwho are referred to as the aristocracy.

be idle than to engage in some honorhanger-on at the theaters.

Gentlemen-Save the Mark!

He gets nothing more than a smattering in the way of education, but his equipment for life is suposed to be ample if he turns out to be a good dancer, a crack shot, and a good mount. It may be convenient for him at time if he is also an expert card player. The worst result of the effect of this class of idlers is that the average Italian who is poor and who sees these good-forothing dandies swaggering around the thoroughfares, only wishes that he had money enough to do the same thing. Instead of being filled with disgust at the spectacle afforded by these social leeches, he strives to imitate them.

Italians as a class have pronounced The dull old town of Siena comes to life on the occasion of the semi-annual horse race in the piazza. This sporting event is unlike anything known in an American community. There are seventeen wards in Siena, and each one makes an entry in the contest. A more See my new book before ordering anyunsuitable place for a horse race could where. not be conceived. The course is over beginning to contribute to the one side of the street is lower than the which leaves the country is sent to southern France where it is put through a process and converted into Bordeaux. ably go down to defeat and disaster, but the populace is fairly frantic at the

It is significant that the word home country farm hands receive better is not contained in the Italian lanpay but in southern Italy wages are guage. This is accounted for by the frequently as low as ten cents a day, fact that the people spend most of their In the latter case there are often extime in the streets. Men, women and considerations in the way of free lodging. To secure a government position beginners frequently work for one or two years for nothing. Among all the government officials, including amount of the people spend most of their time in the streets. Men, women and children go to the cafes to drink coffee and gossip with their neighbors. You will be surprised to find people who wear elegant clothes living in the smallest, and plainest of apartments.

bassadors, there are only a hundred and ten who are paid more than two thousand dollars a year.

They prefer to spend the major portion of their income for outside display, rather than to invest in cestly or even the reporter's fancy that they read comfortable furnishings for their habi-The contrasts in Italian life stand the effect that people can see what you out sharply on account of the mode of living. While large fortunes are few, one is impressed by the lavish show made by those who possess even a moderate income. The rich live in such proximity to the poor that the misery of the latter is thrown into chem re-

hours after he has been introduced, i supposed not to know the first rudi ments of good form. The presentation may have been of the most casual character; he may not even have spoken to her beyond acknowledgong her he raised his hat; but even the does not excuse him from the obligation. carriages arrive and depart from their very doors, and costly viands are served so near that they can smell them. No Men are expected to be exceedingly autious in making remarks to unmar ed girls, but they can be less guarded their speech to an Italian married roman than if they were talking to an

Popularity of the Theatre.

At the theatre fully half of the boxes The professions and commercial pur-suits are little frequented by those family attends the performance night after night. They receive their friends considered more gentlemanly to there, and a call on a lady in her box able pursuit and have an income. The manner in which the younger generation is brought up offers little hope of improvement in this regard. Parents will not allow a boy to go to work if they can possibly rake and scrape familiar with the performances in Eventual to a formal visit to her home. The theatre is the favorite pastime of Italy. It is said that there is not a single town in the country that does not have a hall suitable for giving theatricals. Wealthy persons who are familiar with the performances in Eventual to a formal visit to her home. The theatre is the favorite pastime of Italy. is equivalent to a formal visit to he they can possibly rake and scrape familiar with the performances in Eu-enough to dress him smartly and mainenough to dress him smartly and main-tain him as a loaf r in cafes and a theatre night after night, and seem to enjoy the crude acting fully as much as if they had never seen anything better. Opera is performed everywhere, and all classes are familiar with the masterpieces. The admission to the best class of entertainment is exceedingly cheap. One can hear a good play for fifty cents, but the manner of charging is different from that in our country. You first pay for admission and after that you visit the boxes, stand up, or buy a seat as you prefer.

The papers of Italy are very ordinary. They are not newspapers in the sense of giving the news, because more attention is paid to other things. They are generally published to promote some political or private interest, and derive their revenue from subsidies instead of from advertising and subscriptions as in our country. They have small circulations and make no impress on public life, as do the publications of the United States. No attention is given to

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more like fiction than chronicle. The pages fairly bristle with horrors and there is a shiver in every line. I am sure that some extracts from these queer papers will be as amusing to my readers as to those engaged in the

Suggestions for the Craft.

Here is a suggestion for the American head-writer: "Black Chronicle of Deeds of Blood by Human Wild Beasts." If the feature writer on an American paper should turn in a twocolumn story about the experience of a servant girl who lost an umbrella in an omnibus, wouldn't the editor sit up and say things? The young lady in charge of the society department may find 'Rose-colored Transpirings" a novelty in referring to matrimonial announce ments. How is this for a want-ad 'An elderly gentleman, possessed with ideal health, an elevated soul, and light humor, would be willing to alliance himself to some spinster or widow who has sufficient of that which smooths the thorny way." That fellow evidently wants money, but is too much of a gentleman to say so right out. FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

THE SNAIL'S REPLY.

(New Orleans Times Democrat.) said to a snail; "In the pleasant wea-

Why do you dawdle along that way?" Because I'm never quite certain whether I'd rather go on or rather stay!

"There may be trouble ahead awaiting.
There may be pleasure behind the while.
And so I loiter along, debating
The thing in a philosophical style!"

CHANGE OF TITLE. (Philadelphia Press.)

"Well, well, there goes Miss Strong.
When I saw her last she was posing as a bachelor girl. That's her hobby."

"All that's changed how. She dropped that hobby for a hubby."

"But he got stung in the end."

EVENTUALLY.

(Houston Post.)



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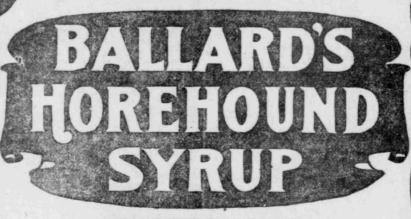
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Dr. McLaughlin: Ferron, Utah. Dear Doctor: It is with pleasure Dr. McLaughlin: that I write you a few lines to relittle or no good results, but your belt cured me. My object in writ-

Provo City, Utah.

Dear Sir: After a few weeks' call to your memory the fact that I bought a belt of you some five years ago. I had been troubled for fifteen years previous to that time with pleasure that I am feeling with weak lungs, and I think I ber of years past. The annoying used \$1,000 worth of medicines with symptoms of weakness that were gradually getting worse and worse ing now is to procure similar treat- are rapidly yielding to the influence ment for a friend, and you are at of the electrical treatment, and I liberty to print this letter, as I am well on the road to perfect want others to know that your treatment will do for them what it did for me. Very truly yours,

JOHN J. RHODES. | yours very truly, FRED PACK. you have done for me, I remain

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